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Assembly California Legislature



CHRIS NORBY

ASSEMBLYMAN, SEVENTY SECOND DISTRICT

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JOINT LEGISLATIVE AUDIT
LOCAL GOVERNMENT

April 3, 2012

Sean Eskovitz
Commissioner, Fair Political Practices Commission
c/o Munger, Tolles & Olson LLP
355 South Grand Avenue, 35th Floor
Los Angeles, California 90071-1560

Dear Commissioner Eskovitz:

I respectfully urge you to vote in favor of supporting Assembly Bill 2191, which I authored to amend the definition of "elective office" to exclude members of party county central committees. AB 2191 is part of item #17 on your April 5 agenda. The FPFC staff recommended position is "neutral" on this bill.

County central committee members are simply political party volunteers who do not perform any governmental functions. They do not handle any public money, they cannot levy taxes or fees upon citizens, they do not vote on policy issues, and they cannot pass laws or ordinances.

Current law states any person who appears on the ballot is someone who is running for "elective office." The intent of this action was to capture all governmental elected officials, but it inadvertently lumped in thousands of political party volunteers into these reporting requirements. This has cost local governments tens of thousands of dollars each year as local county registrars have had to process the excessive reporting for these numerous political party volunteers.

The Election Code's formulas for central committee membership placed numerous volunteers in this category (the 2002-10 central committee numbers for L.A. and Orange counties are below):

	Los Angeles County	Orange County
Democratic	156	54
Republican	156	54
American Independent	182	63
Peace and Freedom	159	32

Last month, the Governor signed AB 1200 (Ma), which recognizes the reality that a central committee member is not an elected official by: 1) ending the requirement that public officers administer their oaths and 2) no longer providing them a governmental certificate of election.

Correcting the definition of "elective office" will eliminate an unnecessary and excessive process that encumbers thousands of volunteers and dozens of county registrar's offices.

Sincerely,

CHRIS NORBY

Member, California State Assembly